

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 SCEM-02 EB-11 COME-00 INT-08

TRSE-00 SIL-01 LAB-06 DRC-01 /158 W

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R 061447Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9020

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4462

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, SF

SUBJECT : SA PRESS REACTIONS TO OIL CRISIS

REF: PRETORIA 4436

1. PRESS REPORTING ON OIL CRISIS IS SHIFTING FROM BOYCOTT ITSELF (EG. EFFECTIVENESS, POSSIBLE COUNTERMEASURES, ETC.) TO MORE IMMEDIATE IMPACT OF BOYCOTT ON ECONOMY. FOR EXAMPLE, ALL PAPERS CARRIED REPORTS ON ANCILLARY MOTOR INDUSTRY (GAS STATIONS, REPAIR SHOPS, ETC.) INDICATING THERE WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN LABOR FORCE FOLLOWING RESTRICTIONS ON OPERATING HOURS AND REDUCED ACCIDENT RATE AS RESULT OF LOWERED SPEED LIMITS. THERE ALSO REPORTS OF CONTINUING SPECIFIC SHORTAGES (BUNKER FUEL, HIGH OCTNAE AVIATION GAS, ETC.) AND OCCASSIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SHORTAGES(EG. FUEL TO OPERATE KALAHARI WATER PUMPS). AS YET, HOWEVER, NONE OF ABOVE SEEMS TO POSE SERIOUS PROBLEM.

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2. IN FIRST POST-BOYCOTT ECONOMIC PROJECTION, STANDARD BANK ARGUES THAT INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION NEED NOT RPT NOT FACE IN-SURMOUNTABLE PROBLEMS PROVIDED OIL FOR CONSUMER USE SHARPLY RESTRICTED IN FAVOR OF INDUSTRY AND TRANSPORTATION. URGES THEREFORE RATIONING AND OTHER EQUALLY DRASTIC CONSERVATION MEASURES. REPORT STATES THAT BOYCOTT MAY HAVE UNFORTUNATE INDIRECT EFFECT ON "RATHER FRAGILE" BUSINESS MOOD AND CAUSE POSTPONEMENT OF CAPITAL OUTLAYS EXCEPT IN SECTORS WHERE SUBSTITUTES FOR OIL AND OIL PRODUCTS AVAILABLE. CAR SALES EXPECTED TO BE DEPRESSED. REPORT CONCLUDES THAT IF OIL SHORTAGE PROLONGED, PREVIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC FORECASTS OF REAL ECONOMIC GROWTH WILL HAVE TO BE SCALED DOWN CONSIDERABLY.

3. EDITORIAL REACTION TO PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT (REFTEL) EQUALLY LOW KEYED, IN GENERAL EMPHASIZING NEED FOR CONTINUED PUBLIC COOPERATION WITH FUEL CONSERVATION MEASURES IN FORCE.

4. SWAZI DENIAL THAT IT LOBBYING OAU FOR RECONSIDERATION OF BOYCOTT REQUEST WIDELY REPORTED BUT WITHOUT COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

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